

## Forensic Science | Unit 6 Case Study – Hawley Crippen

Using the information provided for the case and information gathered from the internet, fill in the required information in the space provided below.

**Introduction to the case:** Hawley Harvey Crippen (September 11, 1862 – November 23, 1910), usually known as Dr. Crippen, was an American homeopath, ear and eye specialist and medicine dispenser. He was hanged in Pentonville Prison in London for the murder of his wife Cora Henrietta Crippen, and was the first suspect to be captured with the aid of wireless telegraphy.

In 2007, DNA evidence questioned the identification of the body found in Crippen's cellar that was supposed to be Crippen's wife. This evidence suggested that the remains discovered in his cellar were, in fact, those of a male person. These conclusions are disputed.

Continue gathering information about the murder trial of Hawley Crippen by reading the [BBC News website](#). Make sure you do additional research to thoroughly investigate the case.

1. Case Name: (1 point)  
**Murder of Cora Henrietta Crippen**
2. Date crime occurred: (1 point)  
**February 1, 1910**
3. Persons of interest named in the investigation and relationship to victim(s): (1 point)  
**Hawley Harvey Crippen, husband of victim. They did not have a good relationship.**
4. Summary of crime sequence: (Detailed summary of what actually happened.) (5 points)  
**Cora disappeared after a dinner party on February 1, 1910. Hawley Harvey Crippen claimed that she had returned to the United States. He then said that she died there after contracting an illness. On July 8, 1910, doctor Crippen was visited by Chief inspector Walter Dew, who interviewed him about his wife's disappearance. Doctor Crippen's story had changed. He said that Cora left him for another man. Dew said it would be better for Cora to contact him to confirm the story. Crippen said he would place advertisements in the newspaper to get her to make contact. Crippen and his mistress left the next day for Canada. The authorities searched Crippen's home. Dew discovered loose bricks under the cellar. When they dug them up, they found a female body. An autopsy said that the remains belonged to Cora Crippen. The medical examiner said that she had been poisoned.**
5. In Lesson 6.1 you learned about DNA and that it is usually associated with a cell's nucleus. What type of DNA was used in this case and what is the significance of this type of DNA? (4 points)

DNA from Cora's grandnieces was tested and found to not match with the remains found in the cellar.

6. In Lesson 6.2 you learned about DNA evidence and its collection. How did the investigators collect DNA evidence in this case? (4 points)

A slide containing part of the remains found in the cellar was used in the trial. It had a scar that was on her abdomen. More recently, a toxicologist examined the slide and claimed that it was not from Cora.

7. In Lesson 6.3 you learned about DNA analysis. While not specifically mentioned in the original article above, the following article ([Hawley Harvey Crippen Wikipedia](#)) mentions SNPs (haplotypes) under "**Controversial New Evidence.**" After reviewing SNPs in Lesson 3, how did this evidence raise questions about the original verdict? (4 points)

It said that the remains found were not Cora Crippen, but were actually a man. This could have worked to prove Crippen innocent.

8. Case significance: (How is this case important to our understanding of Forensic Science? For example, was a new method or technology used in this case?) (5 points)

It shows how important DNA evidence can be to a verdict.

9. List at least 3 things you found interesting about this case: (3 points)

They could still get DNA from Cora even though her body was 97 years old at the time

Some people think Crippen is innocent, but don't have an explanation for Cora's disappearance or where the body in the cellar came from.

DNA evidence was used much later than the crime took place

10. Sources: (Record links to your sources.) (2 points)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CMJL21BkXD4&ab\\_channel=Well%2CINever](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CMJL21BkXD4&ab_channel=Well%2CINever)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hawley\\_Harvey\\_Crippen#Controversial\\_new\\_evidence](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hawley_Harvey_Crippen#Controversial_new_evidence)